

In The News...

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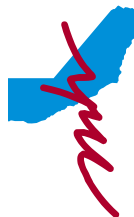
Spring 2004



Department of Mental Health
Coalinga State Hospital



Coalinga State Hospital
148 West Elm Avenue
Coalinga, CA 93210





Coalinga State Hospital

Director's Message

By: Tom Voss, Executive Director

Many people from the community have expressed concern about the opening date of Coalinga State Hospital. During the past few months we have worked closely with legislative analysts to consider a variety of options regarding the Hospital opening date to balance the needs of the Department of Mental Health and the constraints of the State budget.

As such, the May revision of the Governors 2004/2005 Budget includes funding that will allow the hospital to open with the activation of 200 beds. This funding is for a scheduled date of September 2005 for opening, one month later than initially planned.

Staff at Coalinga State Hospital continue activation planning and are in high gear preparing for the opening of the facility. At present staff members are busy developing operational policies and procedures, ordering necessary equipment and supplies, hiring within the appropriated State budget and recruiting qualified staff.

The Coalinga State Hospital Employment Office at 148 West Elm Avenue is a site of constant activity as community members and others take exams and are called for job interviews. We anticipate that our staff will double in size in the next two months.

One of our next challenges is preparing to move on site into the Administration Building, which is slated for completion in mid-summer. Operations staff is in the process of training to take over the running of the heating and cooling systems by early summer. If all goes as planned, we should be at our new address on Jayne Avenue by late summer or early fall.



Construction Update

By: Bill Homsany, Chief Engineer

Coalinga State Hospital is bustling with the activity of hundreds of construction contractors, inspectors and workers all doing their part to complete the more than 1 MILLION square feet of interior space. When construction is completed we will have 47 buildings, 10 elevators, 18 vocational classrooms, 16 dining rooms, two chapels, two libraries and a whole lot more!

One year ago, the site was a flat, barren area with a few trenches and some concrete foundations. Today the site is filled with buildings in various stages of completion including the Administration Building, Central Warehouse, and Central Heating/Cooling plant (all three slated to be finished in the next few months!)

To date, the construction project is 58% complete. Almost every construction trade is active on the project at this time. We have a number of engineers, architects, project managers and inspectors on site every day. Although many of the buildings look finished from the outside, a great deal of interior work is needed including electrical fixtures, doors, windows and even fire alarms. The project is scheduled for completion by mid June 2005.

Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!

By: Cheryl McDonell, Personnel Officer

Our Examination and Employment Units are working hard. We are in the process of completing approximately 50 exams, the first step in gaining hiring eligibility with Coalinga State Hospital. During the next year, we are scheduled to administer at least an additional 27 exams. Plus we have 30 'continuous filing' bulletins for hard-to-recruit classifications!

Recently CSH advertised to fill a number of vacancies. Under the current restrictions of the Governor's Executive Order regarding the State's hiring freeze, Department of Mental Health employees were offered an opportunity to apply for lateral transfers. We are hoping to open up additional vacancies soon to other state employees and other qualified persons, and look forward to adding staff as we come closer to moving on-site.

All individuals who are interested in employment with Coalinga State Hospital are encouraged to contact the Employment Unit at (559) 935-4305, or stop at 148 West Elm Avenue. Applicants must already have eligibility for that particular vacancy whether it is from a certification list, as a lateral transfer, or applying for reinstatement.

Here are a few places to look for vacancies with Coalinga State Hospital and/or the State of California:

- The Internet is a great tool for looking for vacant positions. The Department of Mental Health's website is: <http://www.dmh.ca.net.gov/>. We offer a listing of vacancies with Coalinga State Hospital as well as all of our hospitals.
- The State Personnel Board offers a listing of all State vacancies at: <http://www.spb.ca.gov/>. is a good starting point for finding vacant positions, exam bulletins, job specifications and pay for each classification, and instructions on how to get a state job. If you don't have Internet access, contact your public library to find out the location of the nearest public access to an Internet terminal.



Completion of the "Employment Opportunities" form or a Std. 678 State application is not a guarantee of future State employment.

Affordable Housing New Construction Boom

By: Mae Johnson, Executive Secretary



When was the last time you visited Coalinga? You might be in for a surprise. Coalinga is currently experiencing the largest climb in new home construction in its history!

Since late 2002, over 100 homes have been built and sold! There are approximately 200 more homes currently under construction or soon to be. The best part of all is the affordability of these brand new homes.

Some interesting Coalinga Real Estate facts:

The average lot size is 6500 – 7500 square feet.

The average home size is 1300 – 2000 square feet.

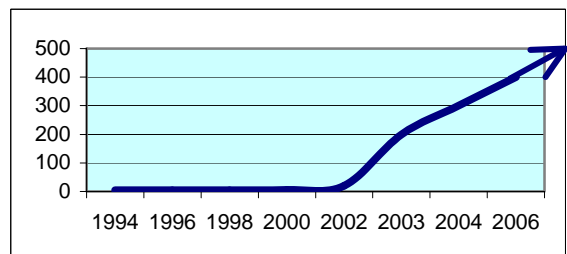
The average price range is \$140,000 – \$240,000.

Market investments are on the rise and have experienced a 10% gross profit increase in Coalinga in less than a year. Realtor's expectations of growth are estimated to increase another 15% in the next few years.

Department of Mental Health will not be providing housing purchase assistance. However, the City of Coalinga Redevelopment Agency is offering down payment assistance for moderate and low-income persons. For further information, please contact Steve Weaver at (559) 935-1533.

Now's the time, invest in your future – come see what Coalinga has to offer you. Please visit the Chamber of Commerce website for further real estate information at: <http://www.coalingachamber.com>.

New Homes Under Construction



CSH Employees Involved in the Community

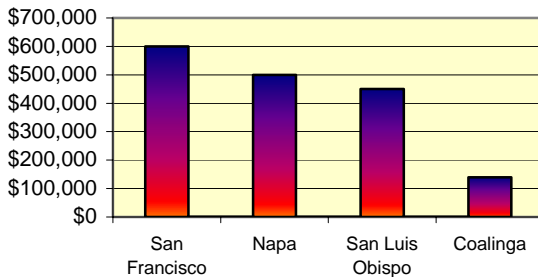
By: Peggy Egeberg, Training Officer

In March, Coalinga State Hospital Employees raised more than \$1,700.00 to benefit cancer research through participating in the 24-hour "Relay for Life." CSH had a team of 17 people who walked continuously for 24-hours. CSH also won third place for best booth at the event.

A number of CSH employees also participated in the Coalinga Bike Rodeo in April. CSH staff handed out balloons for the kids and answered questions about the Hospital.

Two of our staff members will have the honor of judging the Horn Toad Derby Parade on Saturday, May 29, 2004.

\$\$ Real Estate Price Comparisons \$\$



Come join us for a weekend of FUN for the ENTIRE family on Memorial Day Weekend. Some of the events include live horned toad races, Butler Amusement Carnival Rides, Big Saturday parade, craft & food vendors, fireman's water fights, deep pit beef BBQ, sanctioned softball tournament and lots of live entertainment. Everyone is welcome admission is FREE.



Annual Horned Toad Derby May 29, 30 & 31, 2004

Sponsored by Coalinga Area Chamber of Commerce
(559) 935-2948

Psychiatric Tech Program Going Strong at WHCC

By: Cynthia Davis, Director of Health Services
West Hills Community College

West Hills Community College (WHCC) started their 6th class of Psychiatric Technicians last month with a class of 40+ students. This one-year education program prepares students to work with psychiatric patients in a variety of settings from State Hospitals to county programs, Correctional Facilities and private institutions.

Typical job duties for this position include performing nursing duties, administering medications and treatments, supervising patients, documenting patient care and encouraging patients to develop work skills, social relationships and to participate in recreational activities.

To date almost 100 students have graduated from the Psych Tech program that began in August of 2002. The program became accredited in June of 2002. New classes start in August, December and April of each year.

In August of 2005 the program will change slightly to an eighteen-month program of 3 – eighteen week semesters. In addition, a number of prerequisites will be required including: Anatomy, General Psychology, Developmental Psychology and English 51.



For more information about the Psych Tech program call (559) 934-2760 or visit the website at www.westhillscollege.com.

Coalinga State Hospital

148 West Elm Avenue
Coalinga, CA 93210
(559) 935-4305 Personnel
(559) 935-4313 Fax

The Department of Mental Health is
an equal opportunity employer.